YOUTH NEWSLETTER

No. 11 April 1983

Youth Desk
Lutheran World Federation

EDITORIAL: THE PAST LOOKS AT US

"Inasmuch as youth and students are an integral part of the member churches of the Federation, we believe that they should be given recognition as well as responsibility, commensurate with their abilities, in the total Federation structure and program." (Proceedings of the 2nd LWF Assembly, Hannover, FRG, 1952.)

"Who does the church speak to? To the rich, the middle-class, the ruling classes, the 'safe people'. The church is so worried about protecting its privileges that it does not proclaim a message of new life, new men, and new societies." (A Chilean student, quoted in a booklet prepared for the Evian Assembly, 1970, Dimensions of Discontent.)

"Is it not one of the church's tasks to criticize its age and together with the university usher in the coming age?" (Evian)

"Many speak of a 'questioning youth', a common-place misconception. I submit that today we are not only questioning, we are answering." (Evian)

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These reminders of the past prod some questions for those of us involved in youth work in our churches:

20 years have passed since youth were declared an "integral part of the member churches" at Hannover. Does this phrase have any meaning today?

Are we the "safe people" in the churches?

Are we answering . . . or even questioning?

We at the Youth Desk have been looking into the history of youth work in the LWF, both in preparation for the Pre-Assembly Youth Gathering and also because of a special project being carried out by a practicant from the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, researching the topic. In light of this history, we wonder what kind of message we will send the LWF churches through our presence at the Pre-Assembly Youth Gathering and at the 1984 Assembly itself -- what kind of witness do we stand for today? Are we merely mirrors of our parents' ideas?

Some people are afraid of a youth gathering 250 strong. But the sizes of past youth gatherings in the LWF have varied, and yet each has had its own impact. We don't wish to inspire fear of such a gathering. On the other hand, should we not expect the unexpected to occur in Budapest?

The Youth Desk seems an appropriate place from which to raise questions and offer some answers, at least about the ways young people in our churches live. We know that youth today are different than youth in the 60's. Youth today have been accused of becoming too complacent, never questioning. This may be true in certain parts of the world, but in other parts young people are still demanding change, in the churches and in their societies. But perhaps the questions, the demands, the aspirations are different now.

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Editors: Alf Idland, Youth Coordinator, Joan Lofgren, Intern.

EDITORIAL (continued)

We don't expect the whole world to change in an instant. Yet we do work for change, we do criticize, prophesy, witness to the Kingdom, but often within the organizations we seek to change, instead of from the outside. Sometimes it is good to ask ourselves, "Are we too much 'within' to be able to challenge, to question, to answer? Are the questions of Evian buried forever in realistic demands, compromises? Are we who are youth leaders in our churches able to lead only because we are 'safe people' for the older generation?"

Is the Youth Desk a sign that young people are integrated into the life and work of the LWF and its member churches . . . or is it merely a cosmetic camouflage for the reality that youth are ignored in many places throughout the church?

* * *

YOUTH DESK NOTES by Joan Löfgren

January, February, and March have been busy months here at the Youth Desk. Alf and I were traveling during parts of January and February, Alf to the FRG, Hungary, and West Africa, and I to Finland and Southeast Asia. The purposes of the trips were many, and at the very least in order to strengthen ties with youth leaders in those areas and partuclarly to plan youth leaders' conferences. I also attended the annual youth workers' conference of the Lutheran Church in Finland (see report later in this issue).

Youth Leaders' Conferences

In the last part of January, I met in Pematang Siantar, Indonesia, with four representatives from member churches in Malaysia and Indonesia, in order to prepare for the third subregional youth leaders' conference in Asia (see the report from LWI in this issue). I spent an additional week in North Sumatra visiting churches there, and then traveling four more weeks visiting youth leaders in member churches in the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, East Malaysia, Singapore and Lutheran World Service projects in Calcutta. Look for more reporting on this trip in future issues.

Alf started his Africa trip with a visit to Cameroon, where he stayed a few days in Ngaoundere, the location of the headquarters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon. He had the chance to meet with young people, especially students at the "College Protestant" which is run by the church. Then he went on to Ghana, where he met with young people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana. The people -- and especially the youth -- are facing a very difficult situation at the moment. The sudden return of one million Ghanians after Nigeria expelled illegal residents in the end of January, has added to the problem. But Alf came back with strong impressions of young people who have a deep desire to face the challenges and respond to them as Christians.

YOUTH DESK NOTES (cont.) -- Youth Leaders' Conferences

In the end of February, a workshop of youth leaders took place in Monrovia, Liberia. Youth leaders from Nigeria (2), Ghana (1), and Liberia (3) were gathered to assess the situation in West Africa and to develop some plans in response to needs as these were identified. The group decided to select one of them to serve as a coordinator for the region -- Mr. Kpadeson Sumo, of the Lutheran Church in Liberia. A letter to all youth groups/fellowships was written -- upon request a copy is available from the Youth Desk. A proposal was made of having a conference in the beginning of December in Nigeria for youth leaders of the region. The theme will be "YOUTH TOGETHER: LEARNING TO LEAD", and will focud on leadership development.

Art Competition

There has not been sufficient entries in the art competition to justify judging them at this time. Therefore, we will extend the entry deadline to May 15 -- anyone wishing to enter please do so now!

Regional Commission Meeting Participation

The International Youth Consultation in Urach, FRG, in 1981 recommended that, in addition to permanent youth advisors to commissions, a small number of youth from the regions in which commission meetings are to be held, also be invited to attend. This year, commission meetings (the annual review of LWF work by representatives from the member churches) will be held in the following locations, and in each case 4-5 additional youth will participate: Department of Church Cooperation, Argentina; Department of Communication, Hungary; Department of Studies, Sweden; and Department of World Service, U.S.A.

Interns and . . .

There has been an abundance of interns within the LWF lately, though not all of them are "real interns" -- that, part of the internship program within the youth and students program.

Iria Gertz, who has been studying journalism in Porto Alegre, Brazil, arrived in the beginning of March for a six months' internship within the Department of Communication. Margareta Klasson was a student at Bossey (the Ecumenical Institute) this past winter, and she has been a practicant for the month of March with the Youth Desk. She has researched youth and student involvement in the history of the Federation -- especially digging out material from the archives relevant to events in the end of the forties, and into the fifties. Markus Göldner, a law student from Germany, has just arrived to help with a specific task within the General Secretariat. He will stay for 1-2 months.

And we expect an intern to arrive in the Department of Studies a bit later this spring . . . does this mean that youth are getting more involved in the LWF?

YOUTH DESK NOTES (cont.)

Finances

With only two-thirds of the Youth and Student budget "assured" for 1983, we are having to adjust our plans for the remainder of the year. Of course, every effort is being made to change this situation and any suggestions you may have to improve the prospects will be appreciated.

Pre-Assembly Youth Gathering

Work moves forward, as we attempt to formulate plans for the distribution and selection of stewards and other participants for the youth gathering, and anticipating the selection of youth delegates sometime this year. Alf traveled to Hungary in January to begin negotiations for a location at a university in Budapest.

There is still time for you to express your opinion about the issues to be discussed at the Youth Gathering. What are your most important concerns? What resources can you and other youth leaders in your church share with us as we prepare for the gathering?

Upcoming

The next few weeks will find Alf traveling to Africa and Latin America, in Latin America especially to explore the possibilities for a youth leaders' conference for that region, and to attend the DCC Commission Meeting in Buenos Aires, April 21-28.

LETTER TO THE EDITORS:

As one who was privileged to have been involved when the LWF Internship Program was in its formative stages (already a half decade ago!) I am pleased to see that several internships involving persons from diverse parts of the LWF constituency in a variety of LWF in-service educational experiences have been provided. I am happy that the program is continuing. Although it may seem a very small effort in a constituency as large as the LWF's no one can yet gauge the harvest that may one day be gathered from these seeds sown. Similar comments could be made about the Youth Participation Policy.

Beyond that, I am gratified that the Youth Newsletter, successor to that fledgling effort of the late seventies has become a genuine forum for the theological views of youth in the LWF and a vehicle for the dissemination of youth-related information and concerns in the LWF. (Both aspects are present in No. 9.) No doubt the "network" aspect of the newsletter is also improving as its readership expands, and the credibility which comes with durability is established.

As the New Year begins I extend wishes for the blessing of God on the diverse, and often no-doubt difficult tasks of the LWF Youth Desk staff.

In mission, Ralph Carl Wushke

INTERNSHIP REPORTS

Mirium Chiu from Hong Kong has just completed her internship with the Tanganyika Refugee Service in Tanzania. Matthias Schmale and Hans Christoph Hermes from the FRG completed their internships several months ago, but we would like to also quote from each of their reports. Reflections on their experiences in the LWF are valuable and help us to see into the life of the LWF more clearly.

Matthias Schmale (Department of Communications)

"Before I joined the staff of the Information Bureau as a so-called youth intern, I did not know much about the LWF and was a bit afraid of what was lying ahead. Somehow I had the idea that as a very young and inexperienced person I would have a hard time finding my way among what I expected to be the world's most qualified and competent Lutherans. Since this is a Christian organization, I had the romantic idea that everyone would make every effort to create a "pleasant working atmosphere". I very quickly found out - and this is probably a positive experience - that the people here are as normal as anywhere else."

"I realize it is easy to criticize, but I do feel it is high time that the big words and promises about equal status, opportunities, rights, etc., for women, people from the so-called Third World and youth were implemented both in the churches and in the staff."

"The value of an "international experience," which includes getting to know some wonderful people, broadening one's mind, and making one more sensitive, cannot be overestimated. Losing a lot of illusions means at the same time gaining a lot of personal experience."

Mirium Chiu (Department of World Service)

"My specific assignment with TCRS*is to work with women's groups' programs and youth activities. It appears to me that the settlement planning did not specifically mention youth's and women's works. I found it frustrating and yet challenging to work in these two areas. As a female youth intern - a new addition in a male dominant administration - it is in fact difficult to promote the status of women although the majority population of Mishamo is women. In Africa, according to the United Nations statistics, 2/3 of food production and food processing is done by women. The slogan of "to encourage women's group activities in order to enable them to participate and contribute to development on an equal basis with men, and also to share fully in improved condition of life in the settlement" is definitely carried out by the women in Mishamo. Yet, like women elsewhere, their contributions to the economies of the household, the community and the nation have generally been disregarded by financial and political institutions. The truth is that women can do any of the jobs which are done by the men provided they have the opportunity and training."

"In Mishamo, a small community about 32,000 population, it can be seen that youth and women are tremendously contributing in various areas. More youth

*Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service

and women need to be included in administration, settlement planning, training programs to encourage them to try their best to ensure the future of Mishamo. However, having to constantly ask that youth and women be included in conferences or any other activities makes one tired and discouraged. Would it not be more profitable to include the issue of youth and women automatically in the program, and have youth and female representatives invited in proportion?"

"As a youth intern with the World Service Department, I personally profited from the time spent in Geneva and Tanzania. With my past experience working for Indochinese refugees I gained a new insight about refugee service in working with refugees who fled from Burundi. Life in Tanzania is different from life in Hong Kong. Growing up in Hong Kong where materials and commodities are available all the time, one seems to take things for granted. In Tanzania I learned to appreciate more of the things I used to take for granted because most of the time you could not even get basic goods like sugar, flour, soap, etc. Mishamo provided an opportunity for me to share and learn experiences with people from different cultures and customs."

"I sincerely hope that in all the field programs of LWF the voice of youth and women can be heard and be given considerable attention. We all recognize that it would be impossible to completely "standardize" all the LWF operations since we each have our own unique problems as well as resources and are dealing with different governments, process, agencies, etc. However, the similarities that exist and the "basic" standardization we do have, our Christian faith and our great commission - preach the Gospel and heal the sick - add to the successful settlement of refugees in an orderly and compassionate manner."

Hans Christoph Hermes (General Secretariat)

"Regarding my task, I had to read the information material and periodicals issued in German language and to draught summaries for the General Secretary, Carl H. Mau about church politics in the German speaking area, on ecumenical questions, peace, East-West problems and other developments. Doing this I got an insight into the situation of the German protestant churches which I had never had before I came to Geneva."

"Attending the peace conference discussions of western and eastern bishops was one of the most impressing experiences of my internship. Getting to know the church hierarchy is both relaxing and encouraging. The differences between 'above' and 'below' are smaller than I had thought before. This is also true for the relation between an international organization and the parish basis. I have seen the importance of lively and detailed reports on parish life for an organization like the LWF. But after some months working in a parish I have experienced how difficult it is to find out what is important and what is not."

With regard to finances the rich churches in the North are on the giving side. This is known not only among developing agencies, institutions or administrations but also among the critical young people in Northern countries. Because of that we feel like people who are supposed to offer solutions for world problems, like people who would be able for that or at

least like people who should know everything. The first steps against such a kind of thinking is learning to listen."

"For me the strongest stimulations came from people with a "Southern" background. With our Northern way of life like growth as such, pollution, etc. we have partly come to an end, and it is my impression that the "Northern" people could find new ideas from the values of the Asian, African and Latin American cultures. I don't want these regions to be idealized, they are certainly not the "intact dreamland." But more exchange between our cultures could give us new inspirations - without losing one's own identity and without copying the other one. This kind of learning starts with small everyday behaviour. It should belong to the tasks of LWF to give this knowledge back to the member churches."

"When I say there is no special youth theme which would not touch adult people as well I have to add that the contribution of the young people is quite specific: When people are younger they are touched by all problems in a way that is more orientated towards the future, for they have the hope of living longer, and it is simply a self interest to care for one's own future. So young people have to think more radically than people do who cannot hope to be alive in some years."

"I think all youth interns should stay in constant close contact to Alf. This would increase the input he gets from the different departments. 'Thank you' to Alf who cared for this dialogue."

LUTHERAN CHURCH IN FINLAND YOUTH

"We Believe in the Future" was the theme of the annual Youth Leaders' Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF), held Jan. 4-6 near Helsinki. Over 650 workers in youth and children's ministries gathered for the event, to discuss the problems of youth today, youth work in the church, and their future as youth workers.

The ELCF has an extensive youth ministry program, with activities from confirmation to youth and young adult work. The full-time youth workers are generally trained in a three-year certificate program or are pastors working specifically with youth.

Besides the youth department within the ELCF structure, there are independent associations that also work with youth, such as the Christian Youth Association, and Finnish Missionary Society youth office. Activities sponsored by these organizations include Bible studies, congregational youth groups, and festivals.

Although the youth work in Finland enjoys a firm foundation, several challenges are also present: althogh 92% of all 15-year olds are confirmed, only 11% continue to participate in youth activities; the churches have many resources, but cultural and language barriers encourage them to be isolated from other churches and youth organizations in other countries and discourage the sharing of such resources; and the structure of the youth work can provide a sense of security, but it can at times become a burden.

If you are interested in more information and/or ideas about youth work in Finland, a booklet in English is now available. Just write: Church Youth Department, ELCF, Satamakatu 11, Box 185, 00161, Helsinki 16 Finland.

CATCHING A GLIMPSE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA THROUGH THE EYES OF ITS YOUTH

by Joan Löfgren

The following is excerpted from the March 17 LWI report by Joan Löfgren. More information about her travels in Asia will be reported in future Youth Newsletters.

GENEVA, March 17 (lwi)--The tropical scenery of Southeast Asia is like its youth: full of new life, abundant in resources and in possibilities. Like the land upon which they have worked, played and grown, youth have been seen as a symbol of new life--yet their talents often go untapped.

Indonesia

In an effort to enleash more of that potential, a youth leaders' conference will be held July 1-10 in North Sumatra, Indonesia. I traveled to North Sumatra at the beginning of my trip to meet with representatives from the Lutheran churches in Malaysia and Indonesia to plan the conference. It will be the third such conference in Asia sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) youth desk and will gather 30-40 youth leaders from 12 member churches in Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Papua New Guinea around the theme, "Sharing and serving together in Christ". The conference will include leadership training, exchanging ideas for youth work and reflection on issues such as living with people of other faiths and the relationship between older and younger generations in the churches.

"It warms my heart", remarked the Batak church leader as he listened to the youth choir fill the church hall with traditional Batak tunes and Christian lyrics. Swaying in dance-like motion to the graceful rhythms of their heritage, the young "koor" (as they are called) witnessed to the love most Batak youth, whether in rural North Sumatra or in Jakarta, still feel for such traditions. The youth sang at a festival sponsored by one of the six LWF member churches in Indonesia--churches rooted in the Batak tribes of North Sumatra. The youth of these churches see their country, Indonesia, as their own, especially the Batak culture.

There are various youth activities in the Batak churches, yet some youth feel frustrated. They feel their talents are disregarded, or not taken seriously until they become older and married. The youth most often sing in choirs--and sing very well. But they also have other gifts to share--with each other and their churches.

Looking toward the future Batak youth cannot avoid seeing the clouds of economic problems; unemployment is an all-too-present reality for young people today. The Bataks are an enterprising people, but the dreams of their youth will be tested by unemployment statistics and nepotism in obtaining jobs and education in universities. In the churches, I see youth and elders struggling with the aspirations of youth to be partners in the church and the long-held belief that age is the only path to wisdom. Youth in urban areas will also face challenges from an increasingly Muslim society. In spite of these challenges, the youth of these thriving Batak churches can see promise in their furture.

Malaysia

A gold-plated mosque glistening in the afternoon sun and calls to prayer echoing throughout the day reminded me that in Malaysia to be Christian means to not be Muslim. While visiting Lutheran churches in East and West Malaysia, I saw a society sometimes indifferent and sometimes hostile to Christianity. The Malaysian government is unmistakenly pro-Islam. Churches are allowed to carry out various ministries but are restricted in formal and informal ways. Christian youth are a minority in their schools and at work. In spite of restrictions and even isolation such young people may feel, many of them are committed to growing churches and flourishing youth ministries. Several of the youths I met are committed to evangelism, inasmuch as the government will allow.

As example of this commitment are the young people in East Malaysia who come from native villages to a Bible school to be trained as lay leaders, teachers and evangelists. They will return to part-time or volunteer work at home. It's refreshing that the church doesn't see this as a special youth program but simply as an "equipping of the saints".

The ethnic tapestry of Malaysia is reflected somewhat in the churches. One church is predominately Indian (Tamil) and two others Chinese. There are also outreach programs to the native peoples. Now, in an effort to unify the country around a common language, the government is beginning to require that all schools work in the Malaysian language. Consequently, many youth aged 16-17 study, work and play in Bahasa Malaysian. The church is challenged to increase its use of Malaysian to reach these young people who use it in day-to-day life. The future holds promise for young Malaysian Christians, but it challenges them to articulate their faith in a Muslim society and to overcome language barriers.

In North Sumatra

(Left) Smiling faces after a Sundy rally.

(Right) Batak Youth Choir at a Festival in Pematang Siantar

(Left) Youth in Sibolga listen to a presentation

Preparatory Committee and friends at conference location.

(Left) A Batak choir in Jakarta.

(Right) A golden mosque in Kota Kinabalu, East Malaysia.

Key leaders of youth in the Basel Christian Church of Malaysia.

Youth of the Basel Church, discussing "cell group" fellowship.

A DIFFERENT CARNIVAL

"Only through the faith, only through the grace, only through the Scriptures, only for Christ".

With this theme 1,200 young people from the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil (ECLCB) met last carnival, from February 12 - 15, in three different places in Brazil. (Carnival is a festival time in Brazil, just before Lent).

"Only through faith we will break down the gaps between people, the walls of their own limitations, and let them meet and share their needs, frustrations, happiness etc. Faith in Christ will determine what we are and will be, so that we will never reach more than we believe we are able to reach; only through grace will we be able to forgive our neighbors like Christ forgives us; and only through the Scriptures will we become Christians in all our actions in our daily life".

These were the main conclusions of these Brazilian young people in their annual youth gathering, which was a different sort of carnival.

Their concern was how to adapt their conclusions to reality. One participant said: "We are only Christians, with faith, grace and really following the Scriptures, if we have in one hand the Bible and in the other one a newspaper. This will determine the way we see things, how we act and react in face of daily life". "This", he said, "is a challenge to all Christians, especially to young people, who are the future of the church and of the world. They should be more involved with the political, economic and social problems, and should be more and more required for closer participation in the secular community".

(written/translated from Portuguese by DOC youth intern, Iria Gertz).

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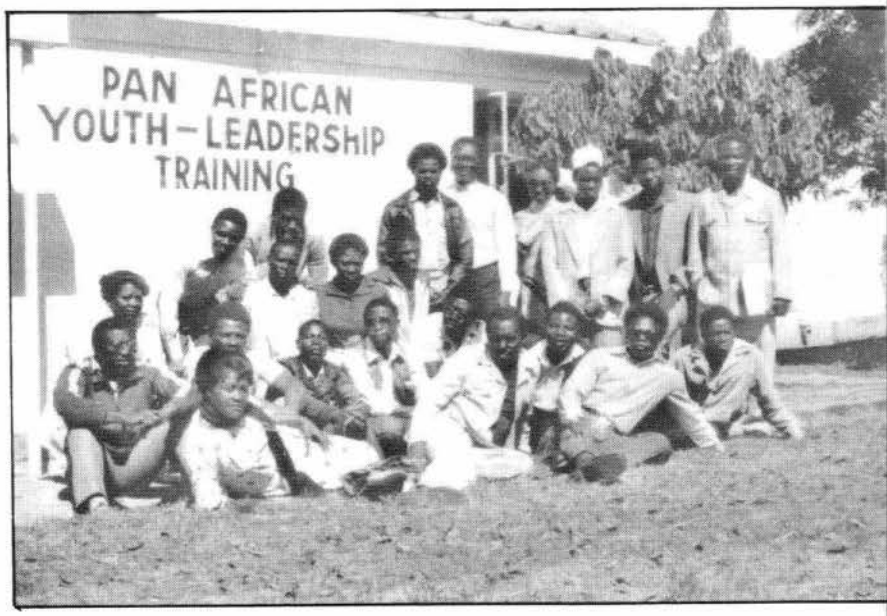
God give me the courage to be revolutionary
As your Son Jesus Christ was.
Give me the courage to loosen myself from this world.
Teach me to stand up free
and to shun no criticism.
God, it is for your kingdom.
Make me free,
make me poor in this world.
Then will I be rich in the real world,
which this life is all about.
God, thank you for the vision of the future,
but make it fact and not just theory.

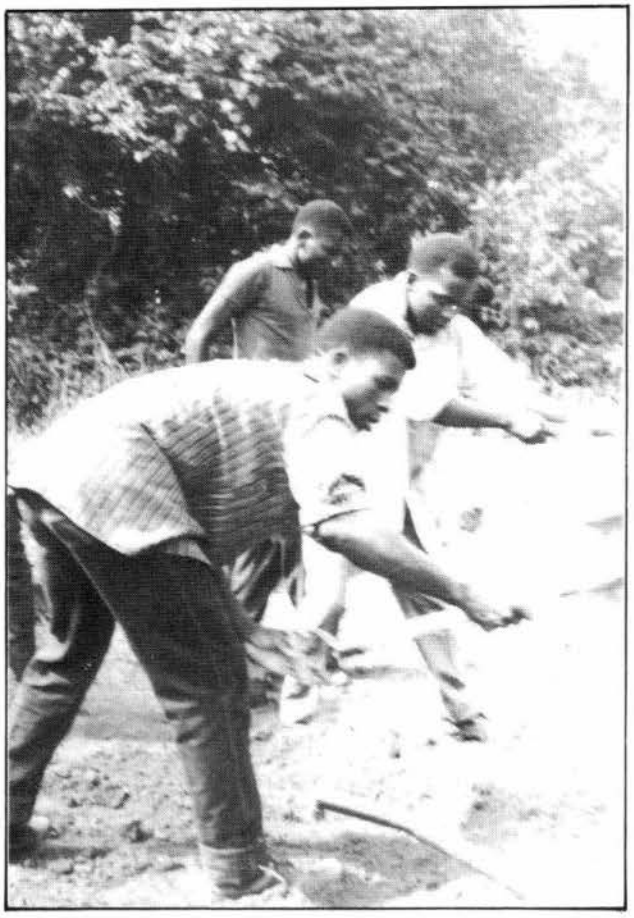
(With Open Hands - by Henri J.M. Nouwen, 1977, Ave Marie - Press, Indiana, U.S.A.).

MINDOLO ECUMENICAL FOUNDATION

(SEE NEXT PAGE FOR A REPORT)

1982 Diploma Students. Countries represented: Nigeria, Ghana Sierra Leone, Kenya, Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa and Zambia.





Land is the answer for solving youth unemployment in Africa. These young men are seen clearing bush for Mindolo Young Farmers Club.

MINDOLO ECUMENICAL FOUNDATION by Michael M. Chanda

Africa is one of the developing continents and has a great problem with its youth and its growing population.

Africa today is faced with a high rate of unemployment especially amongst its youth who are being churned out of schools every year. Most of these are drop-outs from primary schools while others have managed to finish their secondary education but are unable to get jobs.

Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, located on the Copperbelt Province of Zambia, is one of the institutions which is trying to meet the training needs of youth -- not only in Zambia but all over Africa -- in its Youth Leadership courses. The courses are designed to provide advanced Pan-African Youth Leadership training for youth workers employed by the church, government, or voluntary organisations. It is mostly through these trained people that Mindolo reaches out for more youths in different communities of Africa.

The Youth Leadership Programme was Mindolo's first Pan-African course, with its students sponsored by Government, Church, and Voluntary Organisations of their own countries. The World Council of Churches has provided most of the scholarships for church workers. Students are recruited from all the countries of Africa. Some have come from as far as Papua-New Guinea in the South-Pacific. As this type of training for the leadership of youth leaders was new to Africa, the programme has been under constant review and evaluation in order to meet the changing needs of the continent. Progress has been made in establishing the reputation of this Programme among Church organisations in all parts of Africa and overseas. A Diploma course which is offered, is confered jointly by the All Africa Conference of Churches and the Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation.

The course, which is extensive, offers both theoretical and practical instructions in social sciences with emphasis on problems related to young people in developing countries.

There is also a five month certificate course in the same field which is run from time to time depending on the need. The Diploma course is, however, now the main attraction to all applicants and the course continues to be popular as demand for establishing Youth Employment projects greatly felt throughout Africa.

The demand, however, is so great that Youth Leadership Programme fails to meet the need of both the church and voluntary agencies, because of limited financial resources.

Mindolo's Youth Leadership Programme also has a Youth Development Programme which tries to meet directly needs of young people. The youth development scheme tries to give an answer to youth unemployment. There are two projects at the moment: Ceramics and Silk Screening projects. Most of the students attracted to these courses are unemployed school leavers. The courses are in high demand by school leavers most of whom have very limited training opportunities. Mindolo is very limited in financial resources to meet the demand of rising numbers of school leavers. Youth Development Schemes have also been used as a Laboratory by Youth Leaders on Youth Leadership Training Courses.

The youth camp is housing all the young development schemes. In the past the camp has been used as a conference centre for youths and leaders and drew participants from all over the country. Some international youth organizations have used youth camp as a location for their conferences, work camps and seminars.

The Pan-African Youth Leadership course runs for one academic year from February to October each year, and succesful candidates receive Diplomas in Social Youth Work confered jointly by Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation and the All Africa Conference of Churches.

Teaching methods in this course include lectures, group discussions, role-plays, simulation exercises, case studies, slide presentations, field trips, study tours and demonstrations. Subjects offered to this normally enthusiastic group of students include sociology, counselling, community development, religious education, technique of youth work, communication and management and administration.

Since the students are not only drawn from different parts of Africa but also from different backgrounds, their views and ideas do enrich group discussions, and thereby giving themselves information about different cultures and communities in Africa.

In 1981 as part of their fieldwork the students had a chance to go to West Germany through an exchange programme which Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation established with the Association for Development Studies of West Germany. Students spent a month in West Germany and the host government met all the expenses under the agreement. A programme which was an eye opener to youth workers from developing countries.

When students are at Mindolo they participate in campus life and they take leadership roles in various activities. They get involved in Chapel services, choir, sports and youth clubs and other recreational activities.

The Center was opened in 1967 and has gone through many changes. Both staff and students have been of an international caliber.

CORE SUBJECT AREAS FOR THE DIPLOMA COURSE

A core subject areas for the diploma course at Mindolo include: Social Work Method and Practice; Human Growth, Behaviour and Social Process; Social Development Studies and Administration; Religious Studies; and Elections, such as project planning, health education,and group dynamics.

FEES:

It costs a student K 8.50 a day (about US 9,00) for boarding and lodging and a student should provide himself/herself with monthly allowance in form of pocket money.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Anyone can be accepted for a Diploma course when he/she meets the following qualifications:

- One should be a full time Social Youth Worker or fully committed to voluntary youth work or anybody intending to take a career in youth work;
- A person has to be sent by a Agency and should have a good command of both written and spoken English;
- A person should have minimum of five years secondary education or twelve years of education (5 G E C, O'Level);
- Mature Entry: Those candidates in fulltime employment who do not meet those minimum qualifications may be admitted if they have enough experience in the field and have had either Teachers Training, Community Development or Theological Training. He/She should be sponsored by an employment Agency with a good recommendation, and should be about 25 years and over.

DATES

Courses normally begin in February and end on the last day of October each year. Applications are normally processed by 15th December each year. Those intending to apply should write directly to the Head of The Programme, Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, P.O.Box 21493, KITWE, ZAMBIA.

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LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT -- MAKING DECISIONS AS A GROUP

The following suggestions for decision-making is from the March 1983 Network, a newsletter of the Lutheran Church in America's Youth Ministry office.

When we have decisions to make, most of us follow a series of steps which are not labeled but which automatically happen. We usually think about all of the choices and then select the most appealing.

A review of the steps we use automatically reveals a step-by-step system which can be used with groups to get people involved in decision-making and to help a group more effectively arrive at a final decision.

The steps and system in a simple form can be called the DECIDE model for decision-making. DECIDE is an acronymn for the six steps in the process:

D efine the problem. Be sure the issue is clear.

E xamine the alternatives. Brainstorm the possibilities. Don't limit yourself too soon.

C onsider the positive and negative aspects of each alternative. Keep a positive attitude and see how each alternative could work for you. But, be realistic too.

I dentify the best alternative. This could be one or a combination of several of the alternatives.

D evelop an action plan and Do It. Identify each step needed to accomplish your goal and answer the questions of WHO will do WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, and HOW.

E valuate the results.

This process can help a group accomplish any task. It can help you plan a program, select a retreat theme, decide how to increase youth involvement in your congregation, or plan fellowship. Follow the steps one by one, being sure the group knows which step you are on. Don't be afraid to go back a step and revise your previous work if that seems appropriate, but don't jump ahead without completing each of the steps in order. Try the DECIDE model next time you have a decision to make. You can have a lot of fun with this!

FRENCH EXCHANGE IN AFRICA

Last summer in the latter half of August a group of 15 young people - age 16-20 - from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in France went to the Central African Republic. They met for about two weeks with the same number of young people from the "Eglise Protestante du Christ-Roi" in an attempt to establish an encounter among youth of the two churches. This was the first step to which the Youth Desk gave financial support, on the condition that the next step which also was part of the proposal takes place: young people from the Central African Republic visiting the church in France. This next step is now under preparation, probably for 1984.

The purpose of the encounter is spelled out as follows in the report from the successful encounter:

> The imbalance between North and South is increasing every day. While the rich countries are on their way to overdevelopment, the poor countries head towards underdevelopment. Most of the economists show that our prosperity is achieved at the expense of the poor countries.
>
> In response to this situation an appeal is being made to developed and undeveloped countries of doing everything 1) to develop an active awareness of this dramatic situation in the public opinion of every country, 2) to invent modes of life and attitudes more in line with real needs of people, 3) to liberate creativity in the fight against injustice.
>
> In order to become really sensitized to the fundamental inequalities it is necessary with a rational, intellectual and theoretical knowledge, though this may not be sufficient. One has to add the knowledge born out of experience. The church is a place where the different protagonists of the economic war can rediscover themselves and try to initiate a dialogue and themselves suggest some of the decisive changes.

Reactions to the experience (in French):

> *Je qualifierais cette rencontre de fructueuse car elle a eu lieu avec succès, en répondant à nos espérances et souhaits.*
>
> *Ce fut un camp très animé et enrichissant à tous les points de vue; discussions ensemble ou en petits groupes, visite des alentours de Bangui, découverte d'un autre mode de vie, de pensée et d'une autre façon de croire en Dieu.*
>
> *Mais c'est encore au niveau individuel que l'échange fut le plus complet, dans les propos libres tenus entre jeunes.*
>
> *Nous nous sommes faits beaucoup d'amis, et la correspondance va bon train en attendant le mois de juillet prochain.*
>
> *Mylène (française)*

> Les quinze jours passés ensemble à Bangui m'ont apportés beaucoup aussi bien au point de vue de l'amitié que du point de vue de la foi.
>
> J'ai vécu pendant ce séjour dans une ambiance familiale formidable et comme tous les autres participants de ce camp le disent, 15 jours c'est trop court...
>
> François (français)

> Avant tout, je pense que j'ai eu beaucoup de chance d'avoir participé à cet échange. Il est bien sur, difficile d'exprimer toutes les impressions ressenties au cours de ce voyage mais ce qui m'a frappé le plus et qui m'a laissé en admiration est qu'ils sont pauvres matériellement mais très riches spirituellement: c'est surement la richesse de leur foi qui leur permet de pouvoir vivre dans ces conditions.
>
> La seconde grande impression ressentie a été la suivante: j'ai eu le sentiment que ces gens attendaient quelque chose de nous et ce quelque chose est je crois un changement de notre attitude vis-à-vis de ces pays les moins avancés. Nous ne devons pas nous considérer comme supérieurs et devons les considérer comme nos frères, c'est-à-dire nous places sur un plan d'égalité.

Sur un plan personnel, je suis persuadé - d'ailleurs le président du groupe de jeunes centrafricains me l'a demandé - que les jeunes de Bangui attendent eux aussi beaucoup de nous en cequi concerne leur accueil en France pour l'été prochain; c'est pourquoi nous devons le maximum (responsables et jeunes) pour les recevoir dans les meilleures conditions.

Nicolas (malgache-français)

Ce camp a été pour moi une expérience qui s'est avérée très enrichissante, et nous a permis de créer des relations entre des jeunes très différents et, en fait, entre deux mondes différents.

...Les thèmes de discussion étaient bien choisis et ont permis d'apprendre des choses auxquelles nous n'aurions jamais pensé (sorcellerie). C'est dans nos discussions "en tête à tête" que nous avons appris le plus dur des multiples points de la vie courante en R C A.

... En conclusion, je dirai que c'est une expérience qui mérite de se concrétiser en se renouvelant d'ici quelques années, mais qui mérite d'abord que l'on prépare le camp de retour activement.

Nicolas (français)

* * * * * *

LWF SCHOLARSHIP AND EXCHANGE

Many questions concerning scholarship possibilities, for study both at home and abroad, come to the Youth Desk. In an attempt to answer some of these questions, we have excerpted below some sections of a booklet available from the LWF Scholarship and Exchange Office. If you wish to receive the booklet, just write to their office, at 150 Route de Ferney, P.O. Box 66, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.

The Lutheran World Federation is involved in scholarship and exchange in three different ways:

by operating an international scholarship program,

by operating an international personnel exchange program, and

by assisting the churches to establish and administer their own in-country scholarship programs.

International Scholarship Program

For practical and administrative purposes the LWF scholarships have been divided into long-term and short-term programs. As a general rule, programs which last 12 months with the possibility of extension are considered long-term. The majority are for academic study for vocational and professional training. Short-term programs may last from several weeks up to one year, and are not eligible for extensions. They are practice-oriented education experiences, such as workshops, institutes, seminars, and supervised engagements across cultures.

There are three types of international scholarships. Each one has a special application form. 1) An individual may apply for a scholarship. A married person may choose either an individual scholarship or a family scholarship. 2) Group Scholarship. A minimum of four and a maximum of twelve people may apply for a group program. There are two kinds of groups: a church group, whcih exists in the home country already, and an international group, which is formed of individuals from several LWF related churches for a special program. The special program may be a seminar or study course planned by one church or national committee and offered to other churches through the LWF. 3) Family Scholarship. This type of scholarship is new and has been available since the beginning of 1981. "Family Scholarship" is a concept of training the whole family, not only one member of the family, to meet the needs for leadership personnel and skills in the local churches. Begin the application process by requesting the forms from your church or national committee.

Personnel Exchange aims to assist in providing churches and their related programs and institutions on a short-term basis the services of persons with specialized skills, training, or experience from other countries and churches. In-country scholarships are administered totally by the churches, and emphasis is given to the training of evangelists,youth leaders, church administrators, elders, etc. and to equip people to meet specialized needs or situations where service or knowledge is lacking.

PEACE EDUCATION AND YOUTH

A survey of United Nations-related non-governmental organizations concerning peace and peace education has been undertaken with special attention to youth concerns. The UN, along with several non-governmental organizations such as the Christian Peace Conference, conducted the survey to see how UN decisions regarding peace, disarmament, etc. affect the work of secular and religious non-profit organizations and in preparation for the International Youth Year in 1985. The themes for the International Youth Year are Participation, Development, and Peace,

An interim progress report of the survey, which included information from many youth organizations, revealed that "people at the grass roots have a keen interest in the establishment of peace and security, which they view as a prerequisite to development activities conducive to the welfare of all members of society. Most non-governmental organizations feel that the promotion of human rights and the eradication of such evils as racism, racial discrimination, apartheid, hunger and poverty are closely linked to economic and social development. Non-governmental organizations, they further indicated, have a major role to play in the area os peace education.

For further information, please contact the Ad Hoc Committee on the Activities of United Nations Non-governmental Organizations in the Area of Peace and Peace Education, United Nations, Room 1045A, New York, 10017, U.S.A.

(Above excerpted from the UN Youth Information Bulletin, 1982, no. 3).

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

The International Labor Organization has been assisting countries in designing effective programs to combat youth unemployment. The problem has been taken up in many forums in the ILO, including the report of the Director-General. His latest report outlined the numbers of youth in the active population, the expectations and attitudes of youth, their access to employment, the quality of their working life and the role of the ILO, including preparation for the International Youth Year in 1985. The following is a summary of the report (excerpted from the UN Youth Information Bulletin).

In the past 20 years, the population in the 15 to 24 age group has risen by 67 per cent, considerably faster than the total population. For the most part, the increase has occurred in developing countries, where it represents 80 per cent, compared with only 35 per cent in developed countries. The problems caused by the influx of youth into the employment market are far more acute in developing than in developed countries. At present, because of the lack of educational opportunities, four times as high a percentage of adolescents and almost three times as high a percentage of young adults are working in developing countries.

The situation of young people in developing countries also differs because of the chronic difficulties of illiteracy, inadequate training, widespread underemployment, rural urban migration and dismal living conditions. Victims of stagnating rural economics, youth are handicapped by a persistence of traditional ways that imply a rigid division of tasks according to sex and to age, and by agrarian structures which prolong inequality.

The expectations of youth as regards employment are conditioned by social and family environment, by the type and level of education and training received by the mass media, by employment market trends and the structure of available jobs and by their personal characteristics. For the majority of youth throughout the world, there is no outright rejection of work no fundamental questioning of its inherent value. Youth are more critical than their elders of the working environment and conditions. Danger, inadequate protection, unduly long hours, an authoritarian working atmosphere, shift work and night work and the impossibility of taking part in decision-making are criticized. Youth aspirations are derived from the importance they attach to being able to decide for themselves how to divide their time between work and leisure, to new working relationships and to being recognized as individuals capable of assuming responsibilities.

For some years, unemployment has been the major factor in total unemployment in many countries. They were: 73.0% of the unemployed in Thailand in 1978, 69,9% in Syria in 1979, 67,2% in India in 1979. 62,4% in Italy in 1980, 60,4% in Ghana in 1980 and 58,2% in Venezuela in 1979. The employment problems facing young people, whether they are the victims of forced inactivity or are simply resigned to accepting an unsatisfactory job, are alarming, both because of the social and human costs and the long-term consequences. Youth are particularly vulnerable to the general economic situation and more immediately affected than others by an increase or decrease in the job supply. Some who accept just any work later have difficulties in finding suitable employment with good prospects.

Steps taken to improve youth employment include financial measures, more selective action to aid particularly badly hit regions or sectors, labour market policies consisting of better placement

arrangements, measures to increase labour mobility, development of vocational guidance and training and retraining facilities and specific aids to youth employment.

In conclusion the report of the Director-General stresses the fact that the fight against youth unemployment cannot be disassociated from the fight against unemployment as a whole. Youth unemployment can no longer be looked upon as essentially an immediate problem but must be seen also as a medium-term and long-term problem. The training of youth should better prepare them for the realities of working life. The quality of employment should be enhanced. Youth employment policies should be defined at local as well as national levels.

(Report of the Director-General, Geneva, International Labour Organisation, 1982.)

INTERNATIONAL PEN PALS

Are you interested in writing to someone in another country? We have already received several requests for "pen pals" and list names and addresses below. With this issue we being a new section, where we will share names and addresses of those whishing to hear from young people in other lands.

Ebenezer O. Opare c/o Evangelical Lutheran Church P.O. Box 197 Kaneshie, Accra GHANA	"Wants to get into contact with other organists of the Lutheran Church in other parts of the world."
Robert Torkornoo Holy Trinity Lutheran Church P.O. Box 3536 Kumasi GHANA	"Interests: singing, electronics, motor-biking, films, reading, photography."
Akrofi Kumoji Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana Box 197 Kaneshie, Accra GHANA	"Interests: music (jazz), soccer, films, international affairs."
Louis Kwabena Agyei Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana Box 197 Kaneshie, Accra GHANA	"Interests: music, films."
Nelson Dansoh P.O. Box 197 Daneshie, Accra GHANA	"Interests: reading and music."
Nichola Sarkodee-Adoo E.L.C.G. P.O. Box 197 Daneshie, Accra GHANA	"Interests: music, art, photography, and books."
Joseph Sawd St. Peter's Lutheran Church P.O. Box 1046 Monrovia LIBERIA	"Interests: counceling, witnessing, visiting and Bible quizzing." Wants pen friends from: India, Geneva and other parts of the world. Age: 18

English speaking correspondence partners are sought by the four children of a Filipino pastor, their ages are 17 (girl), 15 and 13 (boys) and 7 (girl). Their address can be obtained from:

Dr. Eckehart Lorenz
Lutheran World Federation
150 Route de Ferney
1211 Geneva 20,
SWITZERLAND

BOSSEY - THE WORLD IN A NUTSHELL

Once upon a time - actually 4,5 months every year - there are around 60 people from all over the world gathered on a castle between the Jura-mountains and the Alps; with a wonderful view over the lake of Geneva, in Switzerland. This year 59 people of 35 different nationalities attended the Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies at the Ecumenical Institute, Chateau de Bossey outside Geneva. The course takes place every year from mid-October to the end of February, under the auspices of the World Council of Churches and the University of Geneva.

The theme this year was "Jesus Christ - The Life of the World" - the same theme as for the 6th Assembly of the World Council of Churches this forth-coming summer. The purpose of the course is to deepen the understanding and knowledge of the ecumenical movement and its problems, and to prepare for ecumenical work in the future. It is open to all students, young pastors, priests, teachers and lay-people suitably qualified, which often means on-going or finished theological studies, but non-theological students can also be admitted as members of the course.

We studied the theme and its four sub-themes: Life, a gift from God, Life confronting and overcoming death, Life in its fullness and Life in Unity.

Before the Christmas-break the studies were more theoretical. After an initial review of the ecumenical movement, we studied the theme in lectures, in seminars, in interest groups on special topics.

We brought our own context into the discussions and encountered different experiences from each other's environments, churches, and every-day-life. It was at the very least exciting!

My world-view enlarged - and at the same time the world came closer; Jesus Christ - the hope and the knowledge of His presence in Kenya, in Indonesia, on Tahiti, in USA, on the small Fiji-islands, in Germany, in Japan, in Brazil and in the Soviet Union became real and vivid.

I learnt and understood profoundly that even if the conditions for human life are very different, the real needs of human beings are the same all over the world; I learnt that the western life style and conception of life is very limited, and that we have a lot and even more to learn from the so-called Third World.

Of the participants at the Graduate School two thirds came from the Third World. That fact gave the whole course an important emphasis on their struggle. Above all, it was the people at Bossey that made to course so meaningful. Through we had some good lectures, delivered both by the faculty staff at Bossey, the guest tutors and the World Council staff, it was the wonderful human beings from different places with different outlook that made the Bossey-experience so unforgettable.

After Christmas we talked more about the consequences of the Christian faith. The schedule after Christmas was worked out by the Program Committee of the students. We had a week on Latin America with a visiting lecturer from Guatemala, Julia Esquivel, who moved us with evidence of the struggle in that part of the world. Another guest lecturer was Sister Anna, working in Northern Ireland, who engaged us for three days telling us about the difficult situation there. She showed us though the signs of hope. Another week the topic was women's issues.

One of the most enriching experiences was to worship together; to share the traditions, the songs and the prayers; to come closer to God, to the world and to each other. The many worships made the time at Bossey a deep spiritual one.

Other highlights were the "cultural evenings", one for each continent; the Asian, the African, the European, the Pacific, the Latin American & Caribbean, and the American. These evenings started with a show: the best of songs, dances, sketches, games from each continent...First class entertainment! I will never forget the people from India dressed in saris, singing folk-songs. Neither will I forget the wild African dance to the sound of the drums.....or the silent, peaceful boat-songs from Tahiti...

Though we sometimes worshipped with the local congregation, I missed more contact with the local people in the little village where the Ecumenical Institute Bossey is located. At the sad event of the sudden death of one of the participants, the congregation took part in our sorrow. The burial was at the local cemetary. This event made us understand the reality of death - and the Christian reality of resurrection. It was powerful in the midst of the sorrow. Life overcoming death.

I look back at an intense time at Bossey, grateful to God for everything I have experienced and learned, and above all for the lovely people: Jamaica is now not only an island in the West Indies, it is the home of Barris; Sierra Leone, the small country in West Africa the place where Sydney lives and works; Japan, the home country of Junko; Ghana, Rene and Felix and Ophelia are there; Czechoslovakia, where Michael is living, studying theology... The list goes on and on. All over the world - people I got to know and like a lot. Whatever happens in the different home countries of the participants at Bossey, I have a special connection, a friend to think of, to pray for.

Margareta Klasson

Sweden

NOTE: On the following page are some photos from Bossey -- a view of the chageau, and some scenes from a cultural evening.

PERSONNEL CHANGE IN THE WCC YOUTH SUB-UNIT

Last autumn Peter Moss, who had been Youth Director of the World Council of Churches Youth Sub-Unit, resigned after several years with the WCC. Succeeding Peter Moss, Carlos Sintado, who in the meantime was the acting director, has been appointed the new Youth Director. Carlos Sintado who is from Argentina, has been involved with the Student Christian Federation at a national level, and from 1973-1976 he worked as General Secretary of the Latin American Union of Ecumenical Youth (ULAJE). Before taking up his new position, Sintado had served within the WCC for a couple of years as Secretary for Renewal Centers and Movements. Nirmala Fenn from India is the present Associate Youth Director. We plan to present the new Youth Director and provide more information about the work of the Sub-Unit in our next issue.